

5/27

THE DIRECTOR OF
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

National Intelligence Council

To NEO/AL (Envisel)

From C/NIC

Subject: Attached

Interesting reflections. I think
you're wrong about FRE attitudes,
though. I see deep public
abhorrence there because all
pre-1945 regimes are discredited
and CW are claimed as signs of
mass destruction. If fact, London
and Bonn are major sources of
pressure on us to go into a
CW ban.

Finley

Fritz:

- Reference DCI's question about where's the abhorrence
of CW? (at last NIO/DCI Mtg).

- I put together the following think piece.

- Abhorrence is a western (primarily US/UK) view
- Doubt the US/UK really understand the effectiveness
(+ if so, that they've done much about it).
- Intelligence has always been ambiguous.
(and probably always will be!).

DWE

Date 25 May 88

~~SECRET~~NIO/AL
24 May 1988

The Abhorrence of CW?

1. Some would say that--"Conventional Wisdom believes the world abhors CW," yet at present CW programs are proliferating at about 2 nations a year, are being used in combat operations by both Iraq and Iran, and were recently used by Libya in fighting with Chad, was almost certainly used in Laos, Kampuchea, and Afghanistan, and are being pursued as a priority matter by many Middle Eastern and South Asian countries--all without much world approbation. In fact, a large number of firms in West European countries, as well as in South Asia, the Far East, and including Soviet/Warsaw Pact nations are actively supporting the proliferation of these CW capabilities. [redacted]

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Background

2. When Germany first used chemicals in World War I, it caused massive panic among allied forces, and if not stopped (or if the Germans had exploited its use) could have caused significant losses to allies. As a defensive measure, and to try and gain time to develop their own CW program, the allies mounted a very large public campaign that German usage was inhuman and abhorrent. In reality, many less allied soldiers were killed on the western front from chemical attacks than from normal WW I combat operations. On the eastern front, however, casualties were much higher (since the Soviets did not have the chemical or industrial capability to massively procure masks or the chemical agents to use in retaliation). While the allies were publicly "abhorring the use of chemicals," they employed them regularly until the end of WW I,--"in retaliation." [redacted]

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3. After WW I, the allies decided to try to stop the development of all new weapons including chemical munitions which led to creating a whole series of non-aggression agreements, among them the 1922 Naval Disarmament Agreement and the 1925 Geneva Protocol against the use of poisonous, asphyxiating and noxious gases. None of the bans worked. [redacted]

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4. In WW II, intelligence on CW developments was very sparse on both sides. The Germans mistakenly thought we had discovered nerve agents (since the US had the world's largest pesticide industry and had deployed chemical corps smoke generators and chemical mortar battalions to both theaters). Our intelligence shakily (but without being able to solidly confirm it) believed that both Germany and Japan had nerve agents. So since we knew we had no nerve agents it seemed very unwise to propose using our limited CW capability against what we suspected were advanced enemy CW capabilities (Also, Allied protective CW equipment had not been developed or deployed.) Largely led by

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